(Cop)

Roxbury, June 15, 1875.

Dear friend May:

Thanks for your letter, with its characteristic kindness. Mayor Cobb sent me, some days ago, an official invitation to be present at the Centennial Celebration on the 17th inst, among the invited guests of the city. I declined it, with thanks for the courtesy thus extended to me; not only because I do not wish to incur the discomfort and exposure of such a formal gathering, but really (in view of our past recreancy as a nation, for at least ninety years of the century) because I cannot awaken any enthusiasm in my breast on the subject. Chattel slavery, thank Heaven, is abolished, but equal rights are not enjoyed or recognized, even for those who have been emancipated; and it is humiliating to think that, while the old Revolutionary ground of complaint against the mother country was taxation without representation, to this day one half of the inhabitants of the land, though subjected to taxation, are deprived of all right of representation either in local or national affairs.

I am much obliged to you for so kindly offering to assist me in getting a good position at the State House to witness the military portion of the procession; but that portion, though as a spectacle the most striking, would be to me the least attractive, and the most suggestive of painful reflections. "The glory and the guilt of war" — when will they cease in all the earth?

I shall hope to see you before you return to Leicester, and will try to find you at your mother's or sister's the next day after the celebration. My health is now pretty well restored.

Ever your faithful friend

Wm. Lloyd Garrison

Rev. Samuel May,
Boston.

[Mr May was then a member of the Legislature from Leicester, — and the Legislature was now in session.]

Roxbury, June 15, 1875